

JACK NICHOLSON

recognized this year
by the American Film Institute
the award has always been reserved for worthies
who had reached an advanced age
who but Jack
could have received that honor
while still in his 50s?
start with that distinctive voice
shit eating grin
those over the top moments
when he explodes in rage
the restaurant scene from Five Easy Pieces
or that fist flailing moment of frustration
in the front seat of his car
from the same film
like the rest of us
he's at his best when he's being himself
& not Bogart (Prizzi's Honor)
although he was at a disadvantage
in a supporting role
it is all the more to his credit
that he offers a fine counterpoint to Brando
in the much underrated Missouri Breaks
throughout the '70s his work was striking
Easy Pieces
The King of Marvin Gardens
Last Detail
Chinatown
Missouri Breaks
it's only my opinion of course
he didn't really come back strong until the '90s
with Hoffa & A Few Good Men
I'm glad he's back

A FRAMED COLOR PHOTO TELLS HIM THE WHOLE STORY

you step in
to her high rise luxury apartment
from the 12th floor
you look down on Boston
that photo in the living room
4 generations of females
smile right at you
it makes you wonder
where are the men?
the first husband had one function
bring home the money
& lots of it
when the money was gone — so was he

the second husband gambles
he's around but not in the picture
her son
who fell by every Saturday for 6 straight years
was told nothing about the photo session
he just noticed it one Saturday
he's too artistic
no money there
out of the picture
it was only a question of finally having
the damn sense
to extricate himself completely
from a hostile environment

DON'T QUITE KNOW HOW SHE SWUNG IT

maybe it was her looks
or some unrelenting ability
to pin down celebrities
my sister & I both had bulletin boards
that were covered with autographs
Jerry Vale at the Frolics
ok
have some dinner & watch him sing
don't be ridiculous
after his first show
we're introduced
& I'm shaking his hand
this sort of thing was routine
for them
& for me
while it lasted

BORROW

do you know that one?
someone just wants to borrow
that's the word used
borrow really means keep
my mother bought me a guitar
not that I ever mastered it
really couldn't do much with it
one of my friends wanted to borrow it
haven't seen it since
but I can still look back
& remember
our little boxing session
at the high school gym
I opened up his gums
saw the blood